

STAR LAKE CANAL SUPERFUND SITE

Port Neches, Jefferson County, Texas

EPA Region 6

EPA ID: TX0001414341

Site ID: 0605043

State Congressional District: 9

Contact: Gary Miller (214) 665-8318

Last Updated: June 2013



Background

The Star Lake Canal Superfund Site (Site) is located in Port Neches, Texas, an industrial city adjacent to the Neches River in East Texas in the center of the Beaumont-Orange-Port Arthur Golden Triangle (see the "Site Aerial Photograph" below).

The Site is currently defined as the lengths of two industrial canals, the Star Lake Canal and the Jefferson Canal, from their origins to the Neches River. The Star Lake Canal joins the Jefferson Canal in an area between State Highway 366 and Sara Jane Road (a.k.a. East Port Neches Avenue, Port Neches Atlantic Highway, and Atlantic Road). The Star Lake Canal is also known as the Defense Plant Corporation Canal, the Neches Butane Outfall Canal, the Neches Butane Products Company Outfall Canal, and the Texaco Chemical Outfall Canal. The Jefferson Canal is also known as the Texaco Chemical Company Outfall Canal, the Jefferson County Canal, the Star Lake Outfall Canal, and the Texaco Chemical Company Stormwater Canal.



Star Lake Canal

The Jefferson Canal was constructed in the late 1940's as an industrial wastewater and stormwater outfall. The Star Lake Canal was constructed after 1948 for the same purpose. Both canals are currently being utilized for industrial and stormwater purposes by chemical and other manufacturing facilities.

The Site consists of surface water and sediments in the Star Lake Canal, Jefferson Canal, and Molasses Bayou. These wetlands are habitats used by State-designated threatened species. From the confluence of the Molasses Bayou, Star Lake Canal, and Neches River, surface water flows down the Neches River approximately 3 ½ miles to Sabine Lake. Sabine Lake is used as a fishery and produced more than 1 million pounds of fish and shellfish in 1996. The land use surrounding the Site is industrial, residential, and recreational.

The population of the City of Port Neches is approximately 14,452. Other communities in the area include Groves, Nederland, and Port Arthur.

The EPA has entered into an Administrative Order on Consent (AOC) with Huntsman Petrochemical Corporation and Chevron Environmental Management Corporation (the PRPs) to perform and finance the Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study (RI/FS) for the Site. The AOC was signed on December 22, 2005. The purpose of the RI/FS is to determine the nature and extent of contamination and to gather sufficient information about the Site to support an informed risk management decision regarding which remedy is the most appropriate for the Site. The Tier I RI report has been approved by the EPA, the Tier 2 RI Report was completed in August 2011, and the Final FS Report was delivered on June 5, 2012.

Current Status

EPA is currently preparing a Proposed Plan to propose a preferred remedy for site cleanup. The Proposed Plan briefly summarizes the alternatives studied in the detailed analysis phase of the RI/FS, highlighting the key factors that led to identifying the preferred alternative. The Proposed Plan, as well as the RI/FS and the other information that forms the basis for the response selection is made available for public comment in the Administrative Record file. When the Proposed Plan is completed, a 30-day public comment will be held to receive comments from the public on the preferred cleanup remedy the site. During the public comment period, EPA will also hold a public meeting to present the preferred remedy and to receive comments and input from the community.



Molasses Bayou

Benefits

The investigation and cleanup of the Site will ensure the protection of human health and the environment (see Health Considerations below).

National Priorities Listing (NPL) History

Proposal Date: July 22, 1999
Final Listing Date: July 27, 2000

Site Map



Wastes and Volumes

The Jefferson and Star Lake Canals have received industrial wastewater and stormwater discharges from chemical and other manufacturing facilities for a number of years. This Site was added to the National Priorities List based on evidence that hazardous substances, including chromium, copper, polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons, and polychlorinated biphenyls have migrated or could potentially migrate to Molasses Bayou, Star Lake Canal, Neches River, Sabine Lake, and their associated wetlands. Pentachlorophenol and toxaphene have been found in the sediments of the Jefferson Canal.

The areas of contaminated materials currently at the Site are presented in the RI Reports.

Health Considerations

Human Health and Ecological Risk Assessments are an integral part of the Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study (RI/FS).

A Human Health Risk Assessment estimates the current and possible future risks if no action were taken to clean up a site. The EPA's Superfund risk assessors determine how threatening a hazardous waste site is to human health and the environment. They seek to determine a safe level for each potentially dangerous contaminant present (e.g., a level at which ill health effects are unlikely and the probability of cancer is very small). Living near a Superfund site does not automatically place a person at risk, that depends on the chemicals present and the ways people are exposed to them.

An Ecological Risk Assessment is defined as a process that evaluates the likelihood that adverse ecological effects are occurring or may occur as a result of exposure to one or more stressors. A stressor is any physical, chemical, or biological entity that can induce an adverse ecological response. Adverse responses can range from non-lethal chronic effects in individual organisms to a loss of ecosystem function. Only chemical or physical stressors are subject to risk management decisions at Superfund sites.

Record of Decision

The final remedy (cleanup alternative) for a site is published in a Record of Decision (ROD). The ROD is the official documentation of how the EPA considered the remedial alternatives and why the EPA selected the final remedy. Before a ROD can be finalized, the EPA must provide a Proposed Plan for public review and comment. This plan summarizes the remedial alternatives presented in the analysis of the Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study (RI/FS) and identifies the preferred alternative, the rationale for that preferred alternative, and documents that support the EPA's decision. A ROD has not been signed for the Site.

Community Involvement

Community involvement is the name the EPA uses to identify its process for engaging in dialogue and collaboration with communities affected by Superfund sites. The mission of the Superfund Community Involvement Program is to advocate and strengthen early and meaningful community participation during the EPA's remedial activities at a Site. The EPA's community involvement program is founded on the belief that people have a right to know what the EPA is doing in their community and to have a say in it. Its purpose is to give people the opportunity to become involved in the EPA's activities and to help shape the decisions that are made at a site.

Fact sheets will be prepared as necessary during the planning and implementation of the RI/FS. These fact sheets will be filed at the Site's repository and distributed to people on the mailing list. Anyone who desires to be placed on the mailing list to receive current information about the Site is encouraged to call 1-800-533-3508. This Site Status Summary can be found on the internet at the following address:

<http://www.epa.gov/earth1r6/6sf/6sf-tx.htm>

The purpose of the Site Repository is to provide the public a location near their community to review and copy background and current information about the Site. The Site's repository is located at:

Effie & Wilton Hebert Public Library
2025 Merriman
Port Neches, TX 77651
(409) 722-4554
<http://www.ptn.lib.tx.us>

Site Contacts

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